# IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
# BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

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| In re Application of: | Confirmation No. 8862 |
| John Bullock, et al. | Art Unit: 3623 |
| Serial No.: 10/042,731 | Examiner: Kalyan K. Deshpande |
| Filed: December 21, 2000 | |
| | Customer No. **25235** |
| For: **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR MATCHING HUMAN RESOURCES TO HUMAN RESOURCE NEEDS** | Docket No. IQN0001 |

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Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

## APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 CFR § 41.37

### I.  Real Party in Interest

> IQNavigator
> 4600 S. Ulster St., Suite 680
> Denver, CO 80237
> USA

### II.  Related Appeals and Interferences

No other appeals or interferences are currently known to Appellants that will directly affect, be directly affected by, or have a bearing on the decision to be rendered by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in the present appeal.

## III. Status of Claims

Claims 1-9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 21-23, 25-27, and 29-32 are pending in the application, with claims 10, 11, 14, 16, 18-20, 24, and 28 being cancelled. No claims have been allowed, and all pending claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103. The rejection of claims 1-9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 21-23, 25-27, and 29-32 is the subject of this appeal.

## IV. Status of Amendments

No claim amendments were filed subsequent to the final Office Action of February 21, 2006. Hence, all claim amendments have been entered.

Claims 1-9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 21-23, 25-27, and 29-32 are provided in the attached Claims Appendix in their pending state.

## V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

Claims 1, 12, 15, 21, 22, and 23 are independent claims that are being appealed.

Claim 1 is directed to a system for matching entities having needs to entities having capability to meet the needs. A representative system for performing such matching is shown in Figure 1 with system 100 that includes local networks 103, 104 that include appliances 117, which are used (as discussed in the specification at line 22, page 6 to line 14, page 7) by entities such as job applicants, employers, supplier agents, and hiring agents. Communications within such a system are seen more clearly in Figures 4-6 as the supplier agents 402 that provide employees or other meeting needs communicate with hiring agents 401 that have needs via a human resource server 108. Figures 4-6 are discussed in detail from line 30, page 14 to line 9, page 20.

The system of claim 1 includes needs profiles that comprise "a data record specifying attributes about a need" and includes capability profiles that comprise "a data record specifying a set of attributes of an entity having a capability of meeting a need." Figure 4 shows needs profiles 404 being submitted by hiring agents 401 capabilities profiles 406 being submitted by suppliers 402 for storage in database 414, 416 and for processing by human resources server 108.

The profiles 404 and 406 are described in detail in the specification from line 13, page 15 to line 20, page 16. The matching system of claim 1 also includes "a matching engine" that is provided by the operation of the human resources server 108 whose functionality is described as including the identify box 201 of Figure 2 and the matching engine and match managers 311, 312 of Figure 3. The functioning of the human resources server 108 and its match engine is described in detail with reference to Figures 4-6 at line 21, page 16 to line 32, page 17 of the specification.

The functionality of match engine includes as called for in claim 1 "to identify matched profiles and for each pair of matched profiles to determine a pair of scores indicating a compatibility of a particular match to each of the matched profiles, wherein a match comprises a set of profiles judged to be substantially compatible based upon correspondence of the attributes specified therein." As described in the paragraph beginning at line 21, page 16, each "match record has two different scores, how well the candidate meets the job requirements (this score is available to both the hiring agent and the supplier agent…[and another that shows] how the job meets the candidate's requirements," with the second score sometimes only being shown to the supplier agent.

Independent claim 12 is directed to a "job applicant agent" that includes "a user interface for gathering information from a job applicant." An exemplary interface may be seen in the interfaces shown in Figures 9 and 10, which are described beginning at line 16, page 23. Claim 12 further calls for a "data record generated from the gathered information" that includes attributes describing skills of the job applicant and also "attributes describing the associated job applicant's desire to utilize specified skills in future job assignments" (such as profiles 406 of Figures 4-6). These preference for future use of skills are described at least at lines 3-11, page 25 and are contrasted to conventional "worker identification systems [that] do not consider worker interests and desires and so risk creating job matches that will be difficult to manage and maintain over time" at lines 23-26, page 3. Claim 12 further calls for a network interface to external matching engine (e.g., matching engine 311 of human resources server 108), which may be seen in common components 330 and or appliances 117 and servers 105.

Independent claim 15 calls an "automated hiring agent" with a user interface for gathering information from a human hiring agent (see, interfaces of Figures 9 and 10 which are said to be similar to those used for interfacing with hiring agents at lines 18-19, page 23). The agent of claim 15 further includes a data record (such as profiles 404 of Figures 4-6) that are used by an external matching engine (such as engine 311 of server 108). The data record includes "public data accessible by users accessing the external matching engine and restricted data for use by the external matching engine in obtaining a match ... and for sharing with the users accessing the external matching engine based on predefined rules." The public and private data are discussed at line 24, page 18 to line 21, page 19 with reference to messages 502, 512 of Figure 5 and indicating that certain portions of a job applicant or employer's profile may be marked as restricted and only released after interest is shown in a position or in an applicant. However, this information is used in the matching process by the matching engine, with the rules for release and use of restricted data being discussed at least at lines 13-28, page 15. The interfaces of Figure 10 illustrates a "Visibility" box for marking an attribute as "Protected" for release based on rules, "Public", or "Private."

Independent claim 21 is directed to a method for incrementally revealing information in a profile matching system. The limitations of claim 21 are similar to those claims 1, 12, and 15 but in method form (e.g., matching profiles based on attributes that include attributes in a restricted section as discussed with reference to claim 15). Hence, the summary of those claims are applicable to claim 21. Further, claim 21 calls for presenting matched profiles "in a manner that prevents exposing the restricted information" as is shown in Figure 4 with match lists 407, 408 (see, also, lines 1-6, page 16). The method further includes enabling each user to indicate further interest as shown with interest messages 501, 511 of Figure 5 and discussed at the corresponding text at line 24, page 18 to line 21, page 19. The method also includes "presenting the computing device detailed information including information in the restricted information section of a matched profile" which is shown by messages 502, 512, which keeps the restricted information hidden (except for use in matching processes) until interest is shown by one or both parties.

Independent claim 22 is directed to a state machine for use in a human resources matching engine, such as engine 311 used in server 108 of Figures 1-3. Figure 7 illustrates the exemplary state transitions. Figure 7 illustrates the unmatched state, the automatched state, a first interested state and second interested state (i.e., supplier agent and hiring agent interested states), a not interested state (i.e., where one party rejects), and an evaluating state as called for in claim 22. Each of these states is discussed in detail in the specification at line 10, page 20 to line 15, page 22, and, additionally, the summaries of claims 1, 12, and 15 and particularly claim 21 are believed applicable to the claim elements of claims 22.

Independent claim 23 is directed to a method for implementation by processes running on a human resources server, such as server 108 of Figures 1-6. These processes are shown in Figure 2 with blocks 201, 202, 203 and each of these blocks are shown in more detail in Figure 3. The limitations of claim 23 are similar to those found in claims 1, 12, 15, 21, and 22 but presented in method form. Hence, the summaries of those claims are applicable to claim 23. Further, claim 23 calls for "repetitively and automatically matching the needs profiles and the capability profiles" and then "notifying" a first and second user associated with the match. Significantly, the notification includes "a degree of compatibility for the match to the first user and a degree of compatibility for the match to the second user." The specification at line 21, page 16 to line 22, page 22 describes how the match engine 311 compares the profiles on an ongoing and automatic basis and produces "two different scores" for a single match and that these scores may differ (e.g., a match may be scored higher for a hiring agent than for a supplier agent because their profiles and preferences may differ), which provides useful information to the two different entities in deciding whether to pursue a match.

## VI. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

Claims 1-9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 21-23, 25-27, and 29-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,385,620 ("Kurzius") in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,662,194 ("Joao") and further in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,915,269 ("Shapiro").

## VII. Argument

### Rejection of Claims 1-9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 21-23, 25-27, and 29-32 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Based on Kurzius, Joao, and Shapiro is Improper

In the Office Action of February 21, 2006, claims 1-9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 21-23, 25-27, and 29-32were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,385,620 ("Kurzius") in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,662,194 ("Joao") and further in view of newly-cited U.S. Pat. No. 6,915,269 ("Shapiro"). Appellants' April 13, 2006 Amendment cancelled claims 18-20 and 28 and traversed the rejection of the claims. The Advisory Action mailed April 24, 2006 retained the rejection of the claims and provided reasons that the remarks were not persuasive. Because these argument restated arguments made in the February 21, 2006 final Office Action, the following discussion generally follows the same organization as provided in Appellants' April 13, 2006 Amendment (e.g., the same order for discussing the rejected claims and generally the same arguments).

Independent claim 21 is directed to a computer method for matching profiles that include a "restricted information section." The method includes "automatically matching profiles" based on attributes "including attributes within the restricted section." The matched profiles are then presented to the users associated with the profile "in a manner that prevents exposing the restricted information section" and when interest is indicated by the users using the computing device to present detailed information "including information in the restricted information section of the matched profile." In this manner, users of profiles can present information they do not want made public for use in finding matches, and once a match is found, the restricted or protected information can be accessed by the profile users. Kurzius, Joao, and Shapiro fail to teach all the steps of the method of claim 1, and particularly, these references fail to teach profiles with restricted portions, using the information in the restricted portions to perform matching, and then presenting the information upon a showing of interest by users. For these reasons, claim 21 is believed allowable over the combined teaching of these two references.

In the human resources example, Appellants' specification explains the use of restricted information for matching followed by later disclosure to profile users at page 15, lines 19-24 and page 16, lines 1-6. These portions of the specification describe how a job candidate or supplier

may provide information that is indicated as restricted but that should be used in matching of a job and how an employer or hiring agent may also provide information it wants used in matching but not made public. At page 18, line 24 to page 19, line 21, the specification describes how information designated as restricted is "released only upon an expression of specific interest." These features allow enhanced matching of the profiles while maintaining a desired level of privacy for candidate and employer, and Kurzius, Joao, and Shapiro fail to disclose such features.

More particularly, the final Office Action cites Joao at col. 14, line 61 to col. 15, line 10 for teaching the use of a restricted portion in a profile. However, Joao teaches the use of generic terms in place of true information and apparently allowing users to access this false or generic section while claim 21 calls for no access by users (until after interest is expressed). Claim 21 calls for matching using the attributes in the restricted section, and the Office Action states that this is shown by Kurzius at col. 8, lines 28-40. Applicants disagree as at this citation Kurzius merely discusses using matching algorithms to match criteria that may be given weights by an employer. There is no discussion of use of a private or restricted portion of a profile or criteria that are not accessible. The addition of the teaching of Joao does not overcome this deficiency as Joao fails to teach that "true information" should be used in a matching algorithm but instead discusses disclosure of the generic information in its place. For at least these reasons, claim 21 is allowable over the combined teaching of Kurzius and Joao.

In the Amendment of February 21, 2006, the Examiner did not disagree with Appellants' characterization of Kurzius, and Appellants assume this silence means the Examiner agrees that Kurzius fails to teach the use of a restricted portion of a profile in matching processes. The Examiner instead urges that Joao does teach the use of a restricted portion in its matching. The Examiner argues that the use of generic terms will result in the same time of matching as called for in claim 1.

Appellants strongly disagree. If an applicant provides a generic answer such as "an Ivy League school" but the matching algorithm is looking for a school ranked in the top 5 schools in the country, the generic answer may not result in a match whereas "Harvard" may provide a

match. Another example may be a minimum salary requirement that a job applicant does not want to be public unless interest is shown, and a generic value for this type of attribute does not appear to apply to Joao (e.g., if a range were instead used, this would result in false matches). Further, the example provided appears more to be providing a false "identification" such as Ivy league school rather than Harvard. If this construction is valid, than this information is not used in the matching algorithm at all. For example, as shown in Joao, a person may say they are a "mid-level engineer" rather than Frank Jones, and the matching would not take place based on the school/employer's name or on the applicant's name/ID. For these reasons, Appellants believe that Kurzius and Joao fail to teach the method of claim 21.

Shapiro does not overcome these deficiencies because it also fails to show the use of a restricted portion for performing matches while keeping the information private. First, Shapiro is an effective reference only based on the provisional filing date of December 23, 1999. Hence, the content of the provisional application is the only teaching that can be used to reject Applicants' pending claims. Turning to the provisional application figures, it can be seen that Shapiro teaches that after the matching is complete a party can request matching results but ask that this be done "without name or other key identifying data" being sent or made public. Hence, Shapiro appears similar to Joao in that it teaches that the identity of one or both parties can be kept secret and in that neither reference teaches or suggests that such withheld information is used in the process of obtaining a match. The Advisory Action fails to rebut this argument or discuss Shapiro. As a result, claim 21 is also allowable over Kurzius and Joao in view of the teaching of Shapiro.

Appellants further traverse the Examiner's taking of Official Notice that Joao teaches the final element of claim 21. On page 16 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that the references "strongly suggest that any time during the process of responding the true information can be revealed." However, there is no citation to Joao (or Kurzius) of teaching that a computing device in response to a further interest by "all users" associated with a matched profile acts to present information from a restricted section of a profile. The teaching in col. 15, lines 1-10 of Joao of using generic information "to keep the true information masked for a desired time" does not teach using the true information for a matching process or presenting the data upon showing

of interest by users. In the most recent Amendment, the Examiner asserts that "Upon a showing of interest by a hiring agent, the user can avail the specific details" but provides no citation to this statement or that this is done by a computing device in response to receiving an indication of the further interest from "all the users associated with a matched profile." Similarly, in the Advisory Action, the Examiner states that upon "a showing of interest by a hiring agent, the user can avail the specific details" but provides no citation to any of the three references as supporting such a statement, and hence, this is basically a form of taking Official Notice and fails to meet the requirements for a *prima facie* showing of obviousness. For this additional reason, claim 21 is believed allowable over the cited references.

Claim 29 depends from claim 21 and is believed allowable at least for the reasons for allowing claim 21.

Turning next to independent claim 23, this claim is directed to a method performed by processes on a human resources server. The method is different from the methods of Kurzius and Joao at least because it calls for "notifying a first user associated with one of the needs profiles and a second user associated with one of the capability profiles" of an achieved match. Interestingly, the "notifying comprises providing a degree of compatibility for the match to the first user and a degree of compatibility for the match to the second user." Hence, a degree of compatibility for the match is provided to the two users. These are different degrees of compatibility (with the actual value differing in dependent claim 30, with the degree of compatibility comprising scores for each of a set of matching components in dependent claim 31, and the matching components being related to skills/education, location, and compensation in dependent claim 32). In this manner, the method calls for a match to be rated or scored for both the first user and for the second user (such as for a job applicant and separately for an employer), which allows each to better analyze the desirability of the match from their point of view (i.e., a "match" between an employer and a job applicant may differ with the match being more desirable or more compatible for one of the two users).

The "degree of compatibility" element of claim 23 was not presented originally in claim 23 and hence, no citation is provided for this feature of the method in the first Office Action.

The most recent Office Action cites Shapiro for teaching this limitation that the Examiner found missing in Kurzius and Joao. The Examiner cites the published application, but as discussed above, Shapiro is only a valid 102(e) reference based on the teaching of its original provisional application. The Shapiro provisional application fails to teach the degree of compatibility element of claim 23. The Examiner argues that Shapiro teaches "determining a pair of scores indicating the compatibility of a particular match to each of the matched profiles." Appellants disagree.

The Shapiro application does not use the term "score." Further, the Summary of the Invention on page 1 indicates in step "e" that the preference profile for each party is analyzed "in relation to the preference profiles of the counterparties to derive a first list of counterparties providing a likely good fit." There is no discussion that a score is obtained first to determine the "likely good fit." Also, there is no discussion that a list of parties providing a "likely good fit" is determined for the counterparty or that a score is used to obtain such a list. In other words, there is no teaching that a score or degree of compatibility is obtained for a needs profile (e.g., an employer) and for a capability profile (e.g., for a job applicant). The Shapiro provisional figures also simply describe the system as determining a pool of likely fits without teaching that scores are obtained for fits from both the party's and counterparty's perspectives. In the Amendment after final, Appellants requested that a specific citation in the Shapiro provisional application be provided for teaching the "notifying" called for in claim 23 or that the rejection based on the combination of these three references be withdrawn. The Advisory Action retained the rejection but provide no specific citation, and, hence, Appellants believe that a proper case of obviousness has not been provided for claim 23.

Claims 25, 26, 27, and 30-32 depend from claim 23 and are believed allowable at least for the reasons provided for allowing claim 23. In rejecting claim 25, the final Office Action cites portions of Shapiro that were not discussed in the Shapiro provisional applications, and hence, this teaching is not available under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). Claim 30 calls for the degrees of compatibility to differ for the two users, but this element is not found in claims 1, 3, 23, and 25 and as a result rejecting this claim for the reasons provided for those claims does not state a *prima facie* case of obviousness. Specifically, the Shapiro provisional application fails to teach

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determining two scores or degrees of compatibility, and hence, it cannot teach that the two degrees of compatibility differ. In the final Office Action, claim 31 is rejected but on page 28, the Office Action simply states "Kurzius fails to teach: degrees of compatibility each comprise a score for a set of matching components." Hence, the Office Action fails to state a *prima facie* case of obviousness for this claim. Claim 33 calls for separate scores to be provided for components including skills and education; location;, and compensation. The final Office Action cites Kurzius as teaching this limitation, but Kurzius only teaches that forms for providing information regarding such attributes but fails to teach assigning separate scores to such components. The Shapiro provisional also does not teach such separate scoring, and this can be a very useful feature of Appellants' method (as shown in Figure 8 and the corresponding text). For these additional reasons, claims 25 and 30-32 are believed allowable over the three cited references.

Claim 1 calls for a matching engine that determines a pair of scores indicating a compatibility of a particular match to each one of a matched profile pair. The Shapiro provisional application, as discussed with reference to Claim 23, fails to teach a matching engine that determines scores indicative of compatibility for both profiles in a matched pair. Hence, the system of claim 1 is not shown or suggested by the combined teaching of Shapiro, Kurzius, and Joao (with Joao mainly being cited for its use of generic information in place of true information).

Claims 2-9 depend from claim 1 and are believed allowable as depending on an allowable base claim. Further, claim 2 as amended calls for the scoring determined for each of the profiles in a matched pair to be completed using differing attributes and using weights assigned to such attributes by the first and second users. As discussed with reference to claim 30, the Shapiro provisional application fails to teach determining separate scores for the party and for the counterparty. For this additional reason, claim 2 is believed allowable over Kurzius, Joao, and Shapiro.

Independent claim 12 is directed to a job applicant agent with a data record with a plurality of attributes describing skills of a job applicant and "describing the associated job

applicant's desire to utilize specified skills in future job assignments." Kurzius and Joao fail to teach such a data record in a job applicant record. In rejecting dependent claim 14 (which included the above quoted limitation), the final Office Action cites Kurzius at col. 16, lines 50-57 (with a more background type of reference to Joao).

Kurzius at this citation is describing a "Background Information" portion 1404 of an employee/applicant section 1402 from Figure 14a, and from review of Figure 14a, it can be seen that there are no fields or input boxes for entering an indication of which job skills or attributes that a job applicant wants to use in future jobs. Hence, claim 12 is not shown or made obvious by Kurzius, and similarly, claim 13, which depends from claim 12, is believed allowable over the combination of Kurzius and Joao.

In contrast, Figures 10-12 of Appellants' specification shows that for various skills a user can provide preference whether a next or matching job has a particular skill which enables the data record to be used in the job applicant choosing among various "matching" job postings. In the final Office Action, the Examiner argues that Kurzius "teaches attributes set for matching include location information, educational information, employment information, skills information and previous salary information." However, none of these attributes are described in Kurzius as being able to mark such information as being an attribute that a user wants to use in the future (see, for example, Figures 14a, 14b, and 15 of Kurzius which do not include a box or place to provide such a future interest indication). The Examiner states that the "user is enabled to enter skills he wishes to market and emphasize to the matching engine by entering a degree of proficiency." However, "proficiency" and the claimed "associated job applicant's desire to utilize specified skills in future job assignments" are clearly not equivalent (e.g., an applicant may be highly qualified for a job based on his skill sets but this job may not score well because it requires use of a skill that an applicant has indicated he does not care to use or does not require a skill he has indicated he strongly wishes to use). Hence, Kurzius fails to teach the data record element of claim 12.

Independent claim 15 is directed to an automated hiring agent with a data record that includes public data accessible by users accessing a matching engine and private data used by the

matching engine for obtaining a match and by users accessing the matching engine but only based on a set of predefined rules. As discussed with reference to claim 21, the Joao provisional application fails to provide any teaching of the use of public and private or restricted data in an employer's or hiring agent's profile, with the public and private both being used for matching but the private only being accessible based on certain access rules (such as when a certain level of interest in a matched profile is achieved). As noted with regard to claim 21, Shapiro fails to overcome this deficiency in Joao. For these reasons, claim 15 and claim 17, which depends from claim 15, are believed in condition for allowance over the three cited references.

Independent claim 22 calls for, among other things, a specific state machine having a set of specified stated and claim-specified transitions between states. The Office action merely recites a disjointed list of actions performed by Kurzius and Joao references (with no citation to Shapiro). The cited, disjointed actions fail to show or suggest the specific transitions called for in claim 22. For at least these reasons claim 22 is allowable over the relied on references.

## Conclusion

In view of all of the above, claims 1-9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 21-23, 25-27, and 29-32 are believed to be allowable and the case in condition for allowance. Appellants respectfully request that the Examiner's rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §103 be reversed for all the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kent A. Lembke, Reg. No. 44,866
HOGAN & HARTSON LLP
One Tabor Center
1200 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1500
Denver, Colorado 80202
Phone: (720) 406-5378
Fax: (720) 406-5301

# VIII. CLAIMS APPENDIX

1.    A system for matching entities having needs to entities having capability to meet the needs, the system comprising:

a plurality of needs profiles, wherein each need profile comprises a data record specifying attributes about a need;

a plurality of capability profiles, wherein each capability profile comprises a data record specifying a set of attributes of an entity having a capability of meeting a need; and

a matching engine coupled to repetitively and automatically examine the needs profiles and capability profiles to identify matched profiles and for each pair of matched profiles to determine a pair of scores indicating a compatibility of a particular match to each of the matched profiles, wherein a match comprises a set of profiles judged to be substantially compatible based upon correspondence of the attributes specified therein.

2.    The system of claim 1 further comprising a notification message generated to first and second users associated with each profile in a particular one of the pairs of matched profiles, wherein the notification message comprises the match score associated with the particular one of the profiles with the two match scores being determined based on differing sets of matched attributes that are weighted independently by the first and second users.

3.    The system of claim 2 wherein the notification message includes a selected subset of attributes from the matched profile(s).

4.    The system of claim 3 further comprising:

a response message generated by a recipient of a notification message; and

a detailed notification message generated to the users associated with the matched profiles in response to receiving response messages from both users associated with a particular matched profile.

5. The system of claim 1 wherein the each need profile specifies attributes that describe a human resources need and each capability profile comprises attributes that describe skills of a job candidate.

6. The system of claim 5 wherein the job candidate attributes include attributes describing the associated candidate's qualifications.

7. The system of claim 5 wherein the job candidate attributes describe the associated candidate's desire to use particular skills in a future employment.

8. The system of claim 1 wherein the needs profile data record is persistent.

9. The system of claim 1 wherein the capability profile data record is persistent.

12. A job applicant agent comprising:

a user interface for gathering information from a job applicant;

a data record generated from the gathered information, the data record comprising a plurality of attributes describing skills of an associated job applicant, the data record being formatted for use in and continuously accessible by an external matching engine, wherein the data record further comprises attributes describing the associated job applicant's desire to utilize specified skills in future job assignments; and

a network interface configured to communicate the data record to the external matching engine.

13. The applicant agent of claim 12 wherein the data record is formatted to enable the external matching engine to readily detect matches between the described skills and required skills of a hiring agent data record accessible by the matching engine.

15. An automated hiring agent comprising:

a user interface for gathering information from a human hiring agent;

a data record generated from the gathered information, the data record comprising a plurality of attributes describing skills required by an associated job, the data record being formatted for use in and continuously accessible by an external

matching engine, wherein the data record comprises public data accessible by users accessing the external matching engine and restricted data for use by the external matching engine in obtaining a match for the data record and for sharing with the users accessing the external matching engine based on predefined rules; and

a network interface configured to communicate the data record to the external matching engine.

17. The hiring agent of claim 15 further comprising a template data record, the template data record comprising predefined attributes describing the skills required by the associated job, wherein the user interface is populated with information from the template data record before gathering information from the human hiring agent.

21. A computer-implemented method for incrementally revealing information in a profile matching system comprising:

providing a plurality of profiles in memory of a computing device, each profile associated with a user and each profile comprising a set of attributes describing the associated user;

at least one restricted information section within a profile such that the profile can be accessed by the users accessing the computing device while the restricted information section remains protected from the accessing users;

automatically matching profiles based on correspondence of attributes specified in the profiles, including attributes within the restricted section;

with the computing device, presenting automatically matched profiles to the users associated with the profile in a manner that prevents exposing the restricted information section;

enabling each user that is presented with a matched profile to indicate further interest; and

responsive to receiving indication of the further interest from all the users associated with a matched profile, presenting with the computing device detailed information including information in the restricted information section of a matched profile.

22.    A state machine for use in an human resources matching engine, the state machine comprising:

an unmatched state;

an automatched state reached from the unmatched state upon detection of a substantial correspondence between a first stored profile and a second stored profile;

a first interested state reached from the automatched state upon indication that a user associated with the first stored profile is interested in pursuing a relationship with a user associated with the second stored profile;

a second interested state reached from the automatched state upon indication that a user associated with the second stored profile is interested in pursuing a relationship with a user associated with the second stored profile;

a not interested state reached from the automatched state upon indication that either the user associated with the first stored profile or the user associated with the second stored profile is not interested in pursuing a relationship with the other user; and

an evaluating state reached from the first interested state upon indication that a user associated with the second stored profile is interested in pursuing a relationship with a user associated with the first stored profile or upon indication that a user associated with the first stored profile is interested in pursuing a relationship with a user associated with the second stored profile.

23.    A method implemented by processes running on a human resources server for matching job applicants with hiring agents, the method comprising the acts of:

generating a plurality of needs profiles, wherein each needs profile comprises attributes about a need associated with a particular hiring agent;

storing the needs profiles as a data record in memory accessible by the human resources server;

generating a plurality of capability profiles, wherein each capability profile includes attributes of a job applicant;

storing the capabilities profiles as a data record in memory accessible by the human resources server;

repetitively and automatically matching the needs profiles and capability profiles to identify matched profiles, wherein a match comprises a set of profiles judged to be substantially compatible based upon correspondence of the attributes specified therein; and

notifying a first user associated with one of the needs profiles and a second user associated with one of the capability profiles of the match, wherein the notifying comprises providing a degree of compatibility for the match to the first user and a degree of compatibility for the match to the second user.

25.     The method of claim 23 wherein the act of notifying comprising presenting a selected subset of attributes from the matched profile to users associated with the matched profile.

26.     The method of claim 25 further comprising:

responding to the notification with an indication of further interest in the identified match; and

generating a detailed notification message to the users associated with the matched profiles in response to receiving response messages from both users associated with a particular matched profile.

27.     The method of claim 23 wherein the act of generating a capability profile comprises including attributes within the capability profile that describe the associated user's desire to apply particular skills in a future employment.

29.     The method of claim 21, wherein the users comprise job applicants or supplier agents and hiring agents or employers, wherein the profiles comprise profiles associated with the job applicants or supplier agents and profiles associated with the hiring agents or employers, and wherein the attributes in the restricted sections of the profiles associated with the applicants or supplier agents comprises attributes associated with the applicants and the restricted sections of the profiles associated with the hiring agents or employers comprises attributes associated with the employers.

30.     The method of claim 23, wherein degrees of compatibility for the first and second users differ in value.

31.     The method of claim 30, wherein the degrees of compatibility each comprise a score for a set of matching components.

32.     The method of claim 31, wherein the first user comprises a particular one of the hiring agents and the second user comprises a particular one of the job applicants and wherein the set of matching components comprise components representative of skills and education, location, and compensation.

## IX.  EVIDENCE APPENDIX

No copies of evidence are required with this Appeal Brief.  Appellants have not relied upon any evidence submitted under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.130, 1.131, or 1.132.

## X. RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

There are no copies of decisions rendered by a court or the Board to provide with this Appeal as there are no related proceedings.